



# Complaints Handling and Grievance Procedure Policy (LSM 2)

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## Policy Rationale

Cooks Hill Preschool believe that people have a right to question and influence decisions made and services provided. Complaints will be treated seriously and managed in a respectful, timely and confidential manner.

Feedback from educators, staff, families and the wider community is valued as an important part of our quality improvement.

## Strategies, Practices and Procedures

Our service will endeavor to;

- Maintain the confidentiality of all parties in line with policy and legislative requirements.
- Acknowledge that the common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties.
- Acting in good faith and in a calm and courteous manner.
- Showing respect and understanding of each other's point of view and value difference, rather than judge and blame.
- Recognising that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced.
- Complaints will be handled objectively and complainants will not suffer any reprisals from making a complaint.

### Making a Complaint

The grievance procedure is outlined below, and is displayed on our Information Noticeboard.



*Step 1: Notify your concerns to the Nominated Supervisor in person, by phoning 02 49264464 or emailing [cookshillpreschool@live.com.au](mailto:cookshillpreschool@live.com.au)*

*Step 2: If you would like your concerns to be noted further, you may discuss this our Approved Provider (the Executive Management Committee) by emailing [cookshillpreschool\\_committee@hotmail.com](mailto:cookshillpreschool_committee@hotmail.com). Phone contact details are displayed on the Management Committee noticeboard.*

*Step 3: If your concern has not been adequately resolved by the Nominated Supervisor or the Management Committee, the matter can be treated by;*

- *The Department of Fair Trading (for complaints regarding service fees or business practices.)*
- *NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate, Department of Education and Communities.*
- *Locked Bag 5107, Parramatta NSW 2124*
- *Ph: 1800 619 113*
- *[ececd@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ececd@det.nsw.edu.au)*
  
- *Families are advised that minor concerns can be discussed with educators on arrival or departure at the service; however, for complex or confidential issues, families are requested to organise a mutually convenient time with the Director. This will ensure that the Director can provide families with the attention they require, and the matter can be treated confidentially.*

### **Managing a Complaint**

- *Where possible, complaints will be dealt with immediately by educators. If the complaint is about an issue that the educator considers to be outside of their control, or the family does not feel they wish to share it with an educator, the complainant will be directed to the Director.*
- *If an educator believes they will have to share a confidence with another person in order to resolve an issue, or if the nature of the complaint requires that a third party has to be informed in order to meet legislative requirements, they will inform the family of this prior to any further discussions taking place.*

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- If the concern is complex, or can not be resolved immediately, a grievance report should be written to ensure that the problem has been understood clearly by all parties, and a formal resolution can be decided upon.
- Where mediation is required all parties will have the right to agree to the appointment of a mediator.

### **Notifiable Complaint**

- Complaints alleging the safety, health or wellbeing of a child was or is being compromised, or that the law has been breached must be reported by the Approved Provider to the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours of the complaint being made (Section 174[2](b), Regulation 176[2](b)).
- Written notification of complaints must be submitted using NQA ITS portal, and include the details of the event or incident, the name of the person who initially made the complaint, if appropriate, the name of the child concerned and the condition of the child, including a medical or incident report (if relevant), and any other relevant information.

### **Direct Complaint**

Families can make a complaint directly to the Regulatory Authority where the complaint alleges that the safety, health or wellbeing of a child or children was or is being compromised while that child or children is or are being educated and cared for by the approved education and care service, or a relevant legislation has been contravened.

### **Follow-up and Review**

- All complaints can be viewed as an opportunity for improvement. After the complaint or grievance has been resolved, we will reflect on the concern to determine if any policy or procedures need to change.
- Families will be contacted to determine if they were satisfied with the way the issue was resolved, and educators' will be consulted about the outcome from an operational viewpoint.



**The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will use best endeavours to:**

- When a complaint or grievance has been assessed as 'notifiable', the Approved Provider must notify the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours.
- If a complainant has reported directly to the Regulatory Authority, the Approved Provider will have the responsibility for investigating and dealing with the complaint as outlined in this policy, in addition to cooperating with the Regulatory Authority.
- Identifying, preventing, and addressing potential concerns before they become formal complaints.
- The Nominated Supervisor will notify the Approved Provider if a complaint escalates or is unable to be resolved appropriately or in a timely manner.
- Respond to and resolve issues as they arise where practicable.
- Ensuring that the contact details of the person to whom complaints may be addressed are displayed prominently.
- Advising parents/guardians and new members to the service of this policy upon enrolment.
- Ensure this policy is available for inspection at all times.
- Provide a Complaints and Grievance register.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times.

**Early childhood educators will use best endeavours to:**

- Ensure that grievances are dealt with in accordance with this policy.
- Report any grievances and complaints to the Nominated Supervisor and maintain all relevant documentation.
- As requested, support the Nominated Supervisor and Approved Provider in the above roles.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times

**Families will need to:**

- Raise complaints directly with the person involved, in an attempt to resolve the matter without recourse to the complaints and grievance procedures.
- Communicate any concerns relating to the management or operation of the service as soon as is practicable.
- Raise any unresolved issues directly with the Approved Provider, via the Nominated Supervisor.
- Maintain complete confidentiality at all times



- Cooperate with requests to provide relevant information when requested in relation to complaints and grievances.

#### Links to Legislation & National Quality Standards

- National Quality Standards (2011)
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Privacy and Personal Information Act (1998) NSW
- Privacy Regulation 2013

#### References

- Policy adapted from CELA
- ACECQA
- NSW Ombudsman

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**Policy Updated:** \_\_\_ October 2017\_\_\_    **Policy Review:** \_\_\_ October 2018\_\_\_

Adopted by the Management Committee: \_\_\_\_\_